

# **SAFETY ALERT**

## **GREAT BASIN FIRE BEHAVIOR**

**07/24/2000**

### **WARNING**

The last two weeks have seen increased fire activity in the Great Basin. Current fire danger indices combined with long range weather forecasts indicate the Great Basin can expect continued hot and dry conditions to support a severe fire season through mid-October. Energy Release Components and Burning Indices continue to be above normal. Record high daytime temperatures and single digit relative humidity are the norm.

Implications of these conditions are: 1) higher probability of ignitions; 2) higher rates of spread and increased flame lengths; 3) high intensity fires; and 4) moderate to long range spotting.

Large fires have the potential to control their environment. Large concentrations of fuel will have enough energy release to cause plume-dominated fires. Large acreage may be consumed in a very short period of time. Nevada's fine fuel loading and continuous horizontal and vertical fuels are allowing fires to creep through heavy retardant applications. Backfiring from indirect lines, roads, and other indirect tactics must be considered. Aircraft should be cautious of hazardous turbulence around the fire.

With these conditions, dehydration is a real danger for firefighters. All personnel must ensure they are drinking adequate fluids. Another hazard is snags burning off underground at the roots while showing no signs of above ground danger.

**LOOKOUTS; COMMUNICATIONS; ESCAPE ROUTES; AND SAFETY ZONES!**